Press release | 18.04.2012

EU economic recovery and employment

Focus shift to employment welcome but implementation needs same vigour as fiscal reforms

The European Commission today presented two communications outlining proposals for job creation in Europe in response to the crisis and to job creation and economic recovery in Greece. The Greens welcomed the shift in focus from fiscal rebalancing but cautioned that the proposals will have to be implemented by EU member states. Commenting on the proposals, Green employment spokesperson **Marije Cornelissen** (MEP, Netherlands) said:

"Shifting the focus of the EU's crisis response away from one-sided fiscal restructuring and towards employment creation and economic recovery is long overdue. The Greens have consistently argued that, while fiscal rebalancing is necessary, we cannot simply cut our way out of this crisis.

"To this end, we welcome today's proposals by the Commission, which look at the demand side of the labour market, moving beyond the limited supply side approach. Creating a scoreboard to name and shame reticent member states and keep track of progress is a good first step but the Commission needs to apply the same rigour to ensuring EU member states implement this approach as it has to tackling budget deficits.

"The Commission has underlined the potential for job creation in the green economy. The energy efficiency sector alone could create 5 million jobs by 2020, so EU member states should adopt ambitious legislation along the lines of the proposals adopted by the EP. Member states should also follow the recommendation to shift taxes away from labour and towards resource use. After repeated calls for wage moderation, the Commission also seems to finally accept the need to set decent minimum wages to tackle in-work poverty."

Commenting on the proposals on youth employment, Green youth and employment spokesperson **Emilie Turunen** (MEP, Denmark) continued:

"Youth employment is one of the major challenges in Europe today, with so many young people out of work and lacking an employment perspective. The Commission's proposals mark a welcome attempt to address this problem and there is an urgent need to act. One important step to this end would be the swift adoption and implementation of a quality framework for apprenticeships and youth guarantees, which is currently in the pipeline."

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